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## NEWS RELEASE

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# Neighborhood Fireworks Contribute to Poor Air Quality

(Salt Lake City, Utah) – Before you light those sparklers, think about this: fireworks pollute the air.

The Utah Division of Air Quality (DAQ) wants to remind Utahns that fireworks not only pose a danger to wildland fires but pump fine-particle pollution in the air, that may prompt an unhealthy spike in air pollution that make it difficult for some people to breathe.

“Traditionally, the air monitors record high concentrations of fine particulate pollution associated with fireworks displays after the Fourth of July and Pioneer Day,” said Cheryl Heying, air quality director. “Those most impacted by the unhealthy air pollution are young children, older adults, pregnant women and people with respiratory problems.”

The fires in northern California are impacting Utah, Heying said. The dry, hot weather also has contributed to higher levels of air pollution caused, in some cases, smoke from fires.

Last year on July 4, air monitor stations recorded levels that exceeded the federal health standard for fine-particle pollution known as PM<sub>2.5</sub>. Most notably, the high levels were recorded in areas surrounding smaller gatherings of neighborhoods or families igniting their own fireworks rather than watching a large professional display.

Short-term exposures to the particle pollution can aggravate asthma attacks and lung disease. In people with heart disease, short-term exposures have been linked to heart attacks and arrhythmias.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.airquality.utah.gov/fireworks.htm>.

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